

Post-Event Summary Report

Name of Event: Nassau County White House Conference Independent Aging Event

Date of Event: June 15, 2005

Location of Event: Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York
(Include city and state)

Number of Persons attending: 300

Sponsoring Organization(s): Nassau County Department of Senior Citizen Affairs (DSCA)

Contact Name: Shirley Chefetz

Telephone Number: 516-227-8955 **Email:** Shirley.Chefetz@hhsnassaucountyny.us

Please follow this format for each priority area, with the most important listed first. **Please ensure that your organization's name and contact information is provided at the bottom of each page submitted.**

Priority issue #1: (describe specific issue)

The paper presented addressed the association between the characteristics of spiritual transcendence, initiation and late life independence. Spiritual transcendence is defined as the ability to suspend rational thought and connect with ones' intuitive powers. Initiation, as one of the executive functions, is the capacity to take an action to solve problems of daily living. The hypothesis given is that those older people who demonstrate the attributes of spiritual transcendence and initiation are likely to remain independent at a higher functional level than individuals who are lacking in these attributes – regardless of demographic differences and general health status or physical disability. The major objective is to draw attention to the need to better understand those personal factors that contribute to late life independence. Preliminary research indicates an association between spirituality and late life coping. It further suggests a relationship between the personal characteristic of initiation and late life independence. There is the need to more clearly define these characteristics as well as prioritize the relative strength of their impact on late life independence

Barriers: ((list any barriers that may exist related to this issue)

1. There is a greater burden being placed on government and non-profit agencies to meet increased demands of an aging population.
2. There is a need for individuals to be more self- reliant in promoting their own well-being.
3. There is a need for research aimed at identifying those personal control behaviors and intuitive mechanisms that may preserve or extend older adult's abilities to live independently.

Proposed Solution(s): (list suggested solutions to the challenges described above)

Proposed interventions represent both research and training initiatives to understand those factors that contribute to the development of initiation and intuition in promoting a positive adaptation in later life.

- Create an inventory of personal behaviors that enhance late life independence and adaptation to be used as an assessment tool.
- Design training for care recipients and caregivers to enhance and extend the ability of frail elderly to perform their ADLs and IADLs. Initiation, as one of the executive function, is operationalized as the ability to take an action to solve problems of daily living such as personal care, bill paying, and medical needs, or the ability to locate assistance to solve a specific problem.
- Design training for well elderly as well as gerontology professionals to expand awareness of the relationship of initiation to late life independence and of mechanisms for establishing and maintaining heightened capacity for initiation.
- Design training for well elderly as well as gerontology professionals to expand understanding of the relationship of spiritual transcendence to late life adaptation.

Nassau County White House Conference Independent Aging Event

Submitted by: Ilene Nathanson DSW LCSW, Elizabeth Eggleton Ph.D &
Deidre G. Weliky Ph.D LMSW Long Island University Center on Aging,
C.W. Post Campus, Brookville, NY

4350 East-West Highway, 3rd Floor, Bethesda, MD 20814
Tel: (301) 443-9462 ♦ Fax: (301) 443-2902 ♦ www.whcoa.gov